

Western News

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Clean-up to displace Millwork West, too

■ EPA looking to relocate business through clean-up

Raintree Nursery isn't the only business impacted by efforts to clean up remaining vermiculite or vermiculite dust containing tremolite. Millwork West, owned by Mel and Judy Burnett, will be moved to a temporary location, while all the buildings at the city's industrial park are removed along with surrounding soil.

A new location is being looked at for Millwork West, said EPA team leader Paul Peronard. After the industrial park is cleaned, the land will be backfilled with new soil and the buildings replaced.

The EPA is issuing a unilateral order to W.R. Grace to clean up the industrial park area, where the

export plant for the former mine was located. The EPA will handle the cleanup of the Parkers' property.

The EPA is working with the property owners -- the city and the Parkers, as to what is replaced after the cleanup is completed.

Peronard estimates that it will take 4,000 trucks to haul tremolite-contaminated materials from the Raintree property and 1,500 from the old export plant area.

"Concerns about fugitive losses (from the hauling trucks) is a real one," Peronard said.

All materials transported will be wet down to eliminate dust and the trucks will be de-contaminated, or washed down, at the city industrial park before they head up Montana Highway 37 to the Rainy Creek Road.

The EPA will set up air monitoring equipment to make sure the demolition doesn't release dangerous levels of tremolite fibers into the atmosphere.

"It shouldn't be hard conceptually, as long as we keep things wet," Peronard said.

Peronard said he decided to remove all materials to the former mine site rather than take it to a location at Kalispell or Spokane. Which is why he is seeking a temporary road closing for Rainy Creek Road.

"You're looking at 5800 trucks going up between 7 and 7, Monday through Saturday," he said. "Driving on that road won't be a pleasant experience."

And the EPA will see that dust-abatement is done for Rainy Creek Road.

To work around construction on the Kootenai River Bridge at Libby, Peronard said the trucks will either leave the industrial park site as a convoy or material will be stockpiled for transport after bridge construction is complete or during a more convenient time.

Marcop, a national construction company, has been hired to do the work. Peronard expects 35 people to be working on the project with as many as 20-26 jobs available for local people. The EPA will provide training in dealing with hazardous materials and asbestos.

"First thing I've got to ensure is getting qualified people," Peronard said. "We are not a job program."

Cleanup efforts for the two sites is expected to be done by the end of summer.



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